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Deadwood Dick, Jr.'s, Death-Doom;



OVER THE HARD, STONY, BARREN PLAIN, SCREAMING LIKE A DEMON, DRAGGING DEADWOOD DICK AT THE END OF THE ROPE.

OR, THE **BOSS BULLY** OF **Cold Canyon.**

BY EDWARD L. WHEELER,
AUTHOR OF "DEADWOOD DICK" NOVELS, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

DEADWOOD DICK DOOMED.

"DEADWOOD DICK, your race is run." Cold and bitter and vengeful were the words, as they dropped from the speaker's lips.

It was a scene not easily forgotten. The mouth of a dark, dismal canyon, with a stretch of barren plain, and the curtain of night about dropping to cover all.

Half a dozen grim-visaged men, four of whom were holding a black horse by the head. The other two held a prisoner, whose arms were securely tied with a rope, a coil of which the man quoted was holding in his hand as he spoke.

The prisoner was a handsome, fearless-faced man of thirty or thereabouts, with magnetic black eyes and hair and mustache of dark color. He was roughly clad, wearing a blue shirt, with a kerchief tied at the throat, and coarse trousers that were incased in the legs of a pair of cowhide "stogies." He met the look of his captor defiantly.

"I have heard that said before," he coolly retorted.

"Well, you have heard it said for the last time, now," was the grim rejoinder. "Do you know what we are going to do with you?"

"I begin to suspect."

"Well, I won't keep you in doubt. We are going to tie you fast to Black Thunderer here, a horse that no man has ever been able to tame, and let him drag you to your death down across yon plain."

"A cheerful prospect, truly."

"Egad! but you are a man of nerve. Why don't you cringe and whine and beg for mercy?"

"Ha! ha! You do not know your man, I guess, Melvin Munson."

The other started violently, and paled.

His hand dropped to his hip, and he partly drew a gun from its holster.

"You know my name!" he exclaimed. "You have sealed your fate, with those two words, Deadwood Dick."

He drew the gun and coolly cocked it, but the other man of the half dozen who had charge of the prisoner with him, extended an arm between them, saying as he did so:

"Hold on, Captain Lucifer; don't spoil the fun for the boys that way. We will have no use for Black Thunderer if you do, after we have risked our lives in bringing the infernal beast here. Let's carry out the original programme, for that will be death, certain enough."

"Yes, and I'm glad you stopped me," returned the evident ringleader, shoving the gun back again into its holster. "You never came nearer to your death in your life than you did that moment, Dick Bristol. But I can afford to spare you a few minutes, since the other way will be equally as certain, and a good deal more satisfying."

"Hurry up about it!" urged one of the four who were holding the horse. "We can't hold this devil much longer."

"We're ready now," answered Captain Lucifer, who, as he spoke, advanced with the rope, and secured it around the horse's neck.

The other end was attached to their prisoner where his arms were joined together behind his back.

There was, perhaps, a length of twelve feet between the horse and the doomed man, certainly not any more, and there could be no doubt about their purpose.

"Is it all right?" asked one of the men.

"Yes, it is tied fast enough," responded the captain. "Lead the black devil out here, and let him go it!"

They went out from the mouth of the canyon a little distance, the black horse trying its best to plunge and bite, but finding it impossible to do so with four men holding to its head.

On a little ridge of rock they stopped.

"Now, then, jump back and give him

a scare," ordered the leader of the ruffians.

"One word, Melvin Munson," interposed Dick.

"Say it quick!" the response.

"If I live to escape—"

"Live to escape! Ha! ha! ha! If I thought there was a chance of that I would cut your gullet before you start. No, no, there is no escape for you this time, Dick Bristol, you human hound!"

"If I live, I pledge myself to the pleasant duty of running you and your vile crew to earth, Captain Lucifer. If you want to make sure of my fate, you had better use the pistol as you intended doing. I give you fair warning; only death can stay my hand of vengeance."

"Ha! ha! You are begging an easier death, that is all. You have not the ghost of a chance in a million, Deadwood Dick. If I thought you had, I would do as you say; but your death doom is certain. Let him go!"

The four men released their hold upon the horse's head, and all sprang back.

Instantly the black horse reared.

The half dozen rascals shouted and flung their hats at him, and, half crazed with fright, the animal uttered a scream that was almost human in its intensity, and bounded away.

At first the prisoner tried to make use of his legs, but it was useless. The rope being secured behind his back, the second leap of the horse turned the victim around, and the next carried him off his feet and flung him to the ground with great force.

The wretches laughed and shouted in derision.

Out over the barren plain the horse plunged, screaming like a demon, dragging the helpless man at the end of the rope!

Out into the fast-gathering gloom of night, turning this way and that, was Deadwood Dick carried, into a merciless destiny.

CHAPTER II. THE HAND OF FATE.

When Deadwood Dick next opened his eyes he was in the midst of strange surroundings.

He was in a cabin, where the mellow light of an afternoon sun shone in through a curtained window, revealing everywhere a woman's handiwork, in pretty adornments and gentle taste.

A bird was chirping in a cage near the window, but otherwise not a sound was to be heard.

Dick looked around the cabin.

He was all alone, evidently, for no one was to be seen, and he essayed to raise himself up to his elbow.

The instant he moved sharp pains shot through his body and limbs, and he uttered a groan in spite of himself, and was glad enough to lie still, wondering what had happened.

Where was he? What was the matter? Ah! now he remembered; Captain Lucifer and the Satanic crew of Cold Canyon!

In a moment the door of the cabin opened and a young woman entered hurriedly, her face turned inquiringly toward the bed on which Dick lay.

"Oh! George!" she cried, as their eyes met. "Was it you I heard? Did you call me? Have you come to your senses at last? Oh! how glad I am!" And she ran to him and half smothered him with kisses.

Dick was thoroughly amazed.

He would have pushed her gently away, while he told her of her mistake, but he could not move without great pain.

Presently she ceased, and, lifting her head, looked down lovingly into his eyes. Dick returned the stare, struck with her beauty, and wondering who she could be.

He knew not what to say first.

"How long I have waited for this moment!" she exclaimed. "For days and days you were lying close to death's door, and then, when they said you would get well, there was a doubt as to whether you would recover your mind. You cannot imagine how anxiously I have waited and watched."

Again she kissed him.

"Madam, there must be a mistake here," said Dick. "You—"

"You call me madam! Oh! George! can it be possible that your mind is not right? That—"

"My mind seems to be right enough; but there is some mistake about my identity. You call me George, and that certainly is not my name."

She drew away from him, her eyes open wide and having a look of dismay in their depths.

"Not George?" she gasped. "Then who are you? Tell me, for heaven's sake, before I go mad!"

"I must first learn where I am, lady, and some of the attendant circumstances of my being here. Will you enlighten me on these points?"

"Oh! I am not mistaken! Your voice and your eyes—no one else had such eyes, George. It is as the doctors feared; you do not know yourself."

She wept, and her tears dropped upon his face.

Dick was distressed. What strange destiny had thrown him into this woman's life and love?

He ran events over in his mind rapidly. He had never seen her before in his life, and he knew perfectly well who he was—Richard M. Bristol, better known as Deadwood Dick, Junior.

It was plain that she was mistaken—love was deceived.

"Lady, there is some great mistake. Whom do you take me to be?"

"Who but my husband—George Grill."

"That is not my name. I never heard it before. I have no right here. You must not kiss me again, for I am *not* your husband!"

She stood a little distance apart now, looking at him with piercing glance, and Dick, watching her face, could see that he had not convinced her. It was a case surpassing strange.

Suddenly she turned and went out, but in a few moments returned, carrying in her arms a little boy maybe three years and a half old.

"See, Geordie!" she said, while she held him close to the bed; "who is it?"

"My papa! my papa!" he cried; and he struggled to get down to Dick's face, while tears filled the woman's eyes.

"George," she pleaded, "do you not know the child—your child and mine? Does not the sight of him, and his voice calling you, bring you back to your identity?"

Dick was in a quandary. He knew not what to say or do, so greatly was he puzzled.

"You will have to tell me everything," he said. "I insist that there is a terrible mistake here."

"But, George, everybody who knew you before knows you now, and you have been here these many days."

"How long was I absent from you, then?"

"Almost a year—and, oh! I feared that you were dead. You know you said you would not be gone longer than four months at the very most—you expected to return within three months."

"And when did I return?"

"You were found, more dead than alive, by a party of men from here, men who knew you, and they brought you to me. Oh! George! why can you not remember the past? You will break my heart if you insist that you are not yourself—that you are not mine and I am not yours!"

CHAPTER III.

CAPTAIN LUCIFER'S CAPTIVE.

"Well, George Grill, are you ready yet to tell the secret?"

"Never, never!" The reply was almost screamed. "If I could get at your throat, though, I would have your life in one minute!"

"Ha! ha! I have not the least doubt of it. But, you see, you are my prisoner, safe enough, and there is no help for you. And that little woman of yours is about drying her eyes."

"Curse you, Melvin Munson! Let me out of here!"

"Ha, ha!"

"Curse you! curse you! You are less a man than the wild hyena that prowls the plains! Would to God that I could get at your throat!"

"Tell the secret, my dear fellow, and you shall be set free without delay. You have been here a long time, now, and if you remain much longer you will find your wife married again when you do return."

"You demon! You dare to mention her with your vile lips?"

The poor prisoner tugged madly at the chains that held him bound to the wall in his rocky prison.

"Oh! I mean it. Women do not mourn their mates forever, as a rule. She already believes you dead, and the first gay fellow that happens along will undertake to heal the wound—"

The prisoner raved like a maniac, in his endeavors to get at his tormentor. He pulled at his chains, his eyes almost blazed, and his thin face was horribly distorted with passion. What his mental torture was must be left to the imagination.

The other drew back from him involuntarily.

"Will you tell?"

"Never, if I rot here!"

"That is likely to be your fate, then, for I am not coming again for six months."

"Six months!"

"That is what I said. The last time I was here was three months ago, and you doubted me then when I told you that I would not come in three months, yet it has been three months to the very day."

"My God!"

The prisoner buried his face in his hands and sank to the floor.

His captor looked on him gloatingly, feeling that he had at last broken his spirit, and that victory was his.

"And if I meant three months then, I mean six months this time, as sure as you live this minute! Make your mind up quick, for I am in no humor to monkey with you."

"But think of the consequences if I tell! Better far take me out and shoot me like a dog."

"No, I prefer that you shall stay here and die like a rat."

"You are a devil!"

"Men call me Captain Lucifer, that is true."

"But have I not told you time and again that I do not know the secret you try to force from me?"

"And have I not told you just as often that you lie? It is no use, George

Grill; you either tell me or you stay here, and I give you just two minutes in which to make up your mind."

The prisoner moaned.

"Six months will make a big difference, you must reflect. The last time I went down to Silver Bullet your wife was giving you up for dead, and it was no secret there that a young man was doing all he could to fasten the impression in her mind—"

"You lie! you lie! My wife is too good, too true—"

"Not a doubt of it, while she thought you lived, but now she is becoming convinced that you must be dead. And why not? You expected to be back in three months or less, and here it is a year since you left her. Say, you must begin to want to see that boy of yours, I should think, and six months will be a long time to—"

"God in heaven give me power to break these chains!"

The prisoner made a leap at the throat of his tormentor, and with such force that he hurt himself not a little.

"It is no use. You are here to stay, unless you decide to tell what I want to know. If you will do that, I will free you within an hour."

"You are lying to me, curse you."

"No, I mean it."

"But, then, do you not know that you have made me your worst foe? I would not now rest until I had found your heart for all you have made me suffer. You would not trust me."

"Ha! ha! Do you imagine that I would fear you or your like? You do not know Captain Lucifer, or that idea would be the last to fix itself upon your mind. No, no, you do not know me; or you would not hesitate about telling what I demand."

"It is because I do know you, Melvin Munson, that I will not tell."

"You have not begun to know me yet. What if I put you to the torture, to make you yield? I tell you that a Sioux chief could not invent half the things that I could make you suffer—aye, that I will make you suffer, if you do not relent! Come, the time is fast slipping away from you, and you have not given me your decision."

"Do you not know how impossible it is for me to tell? In the name of heaven, have mercy on me."

"No mercy, unless you disclose?"

"And if I do tell, then you will end my life. I see it in your face, demon that you are. You would not dare to let me live, after what you have made me suffer—and you would act wisely."

The prisoner in chains was again upon his feet, and now he stood with arms folded on his breast.

There was defiance in his very look.

"You mean to refuse, I see it in your eyes," said the inhuman wretch, "but think twice before you do. Think of your wife, your child, and your further stay of six months here, and what can happen to them in that time. I can carry the proof to Silver Bullet that you are dead; a skeleton found in the hills, and so forth, will do it nicely."

"Go! curse you! go!" screamed the prisoner. "Not another word from your accursed lips! Your words come from a heart as black as crime can make it, and I would not believe you though you took your oath to every syllable you uttered. Go! and my curse with you! before I call upon God to lend me the strength of a Samson to pull these eternal rocks down upon us both! Go! and whether it be six months or six years, or sixty, I will never reveal the secret you are so eager to have out of me!"

CHAPTER IV. SCHEMES STARTED.

Cold Camp, situate in Cold Canyon, was a hard place.

How it came by its odd name does not concern us, but it more than probably heired it naturally.

Cold Canyon was one of the coolest places in summer, and one of the bleakest in winter, to be found anywhere in the hills. Somehow the wind seemed to seek that particular thoroughfare.

And the camp—it was as hard as it was cold.

The seasons made some difference in the temperature; in the camp's character, none.

It was a hard hole, first, last, and all the time—as hard as could be, and the worthy citizens of the place actually boasted of its hardness. There was not another camp anywhere round about that could at all compare with it.

This was acknowledged.

The chieftain and boss bully of the clan, so to say, was one Dudley Hockman.

Hockman was, in more ways than one, monarch of all he surveyed, for he happened to be sheriff of the county.

Locally, he was owner of the mine that gave Cold Camp its excuse for existing. Not only so, but he was mayor of the camp—and no camp is complete without a mayor, in the "wild and woolly."

Next to Hockman stood Melvin Munson.

He was manager of the mine for Hockman, and, in the latter's absence, ruled in his stead in and about the canyon.

Hockman's duties as sheriff and his other interests kept him away a part of the time, and so, in reality, the camp was under the sway of Munson in his stead.

At the time of which we write, Hockman had just returned from one of his periodic absences.

He met Munson in the "Snug Snap" saloon.

They shook hands, took a drink, and set off together for the office of the mine.

In the presence of others they had made only commonplace remarks, but they became more confidential as they proceeded in the direction of the office as mentioned.

"Well, what is the word?" asked Hockman.

"Just the same, if you mean concerning our man."

"I do."

"Well, there he is, and the devil himself could not make him tell what he knows."

"We'll have to see about that."

"There is only one way open to us, now; we have tried this way long enough."

"And how is that?"

"Torture."

"If he is as stubborn as you have said, I doubt whether that would have the desired effect."

"No knowing till we try it."

"I suppose not."

"The fact of the business is, he has made up his mind that he will stay there till he rots before he will let it out."

"When did you see him last?"

"A month ago."

"What did he say then?"

"The same as he had said three months before."

"That he would not tell, eh?"

"Exactly."

"And what further threats did you make to force him to come to the scratch?"

"I told him that I would leave him

there six months, but what he should disclose the secret, but still he was stubborn. I could not break him down, though I thought once I was coming near to doing it."

"How was that?"

"When I reminded him of his wife and child."

"That is the one thing that I thought would break him down long before this."

"And I worked it for all it was worth, too, but all to no purpose. He would not yield. Reminded me that it was impossible, and all that. Said I had much better shoot him."

"I guess it will have to be torture, as you say."

"And I am doubtful of even that."

"Ha! how so?"

"He would not trust us."

"We are not asking him to trust us, are we?"

"All we have to promise him is his liberty, if he will disclose."

"And isn't that enough?"

"Ought to be, that is true, after the long time he has been here; but he suspects that we would not keep our word with him."

"The deuce."

"And with good reason, too. He argues that once we had his secret out of him we would put him out of the way to be rid of him, for we would not be likely to let him live for revenge."

They had by this time come to the office of the mine.

Hockman was thoughtful, and entered the office with head bowed and lips compressed.

His bower, or tool, was close behind him, and closed the door and slipped the bolt into place. Evidently they did not want to be disturbed.

Munson took some cigars out of a drawer and offered Hockman his choice, and they lighted and took seats, and for some moments the silence was not broken.

Hockman was the first to speak.

"Munson," he said, "there is one thing strikes me with force just at this time."

"What is that?"

"That we have fooled away a year on that fellow all for nothing."

"I don't know but you are about right."

"And I am in favor of the other plan without delay."

"What other plan?"

"Torture. If he won't tell under torture, he won't tell at all, will he?"

"That is about the size of it, I guess."

"Then there is no use losing another day. As I said, we have fooled away a year with him. That is long enough."

"And yet there will have to be a limit to his torture."

"Why so?"

"It will not do to risk his life. If we kill him, the secret is sealed forever."

"Ha! you are right. That is a point that almost slipped my mind for the time being. Well, we can make it interesting for him without killing him."

At that moment a hand tried the door. Finding it was fastened, there came an imperative knock, and at the same time a voice called out:

"Open up, boss, if you are there."

"Who is it?" inquired Hockman.

"It is Johnny Glass, I guess."

"One of your guardsmen! Open the door at once."

But Munson was already doing that, and the same moment a rough-looking fellow stepped into the room.

His face was all excitement, and he was so nervous that he could hardly control his voice sufficiently to tell what had brought him there.

"Come, out with it," cried Munson. "He—he—he's gone!" the fellow exclaimed.

"Gone! Who's gone?"

"Ther prisoner—"

"Good heavens! you don't mean—"

"As sure as shootin', boss; he's clean gone, and—"

"And your life shall pay for it, mark you that! When did he get away? How did he do it?"

"I don't know when nor how, but he is gone sure enough, and poor Ned is a-layin' up ther in ther cavern as dead as a door nail—"

"Dead? Ned Grady dead?"

"Jest so."

The two men looked at each other, and the newsbearer shifted his weight from one foot to the other.

"Tell us about it," said Munson. "By heavens, Hockman, if this report is true, then we are in a devil of a fix, sure enough! Out with it, Johnny."

"That is all ther is of it. I went up ther to take Grady some terbakker, as I had promised him I would do, and ther he laid, stone dead, and—"

"And the prisoner gone!"

"Clean gone, hide and hair, and I have run all ther way hyer, almost, ter tell ye quick so's ye could git after him, captain. He has somehow slipped his chains, and ther is poor Grady with a hole plunked clean into his head, where he has been hit with a sharp rock. Et is too cussed bad, and ef we git holt of ther cuss, hangin' will be too good fer him!"

Of a sudden, Munson drew a gun and presented it straight at the fellow's head, almost scaring him into fits, if his face was an index to his emotions.

CHAPTER V.

SURMISES AND MYSTERIES.

"What yer doin'?"

So cried Johnny Glass, as he tumbled back to get out of the way.

"I'll show you what I am doing," grated Munson. "Get up here, and let me have a square look into your eyes."

"What is the matter?" demanded Hockman. "You might as well shoot the man as scare him to death. What has the fellow been doing? What is the matter with you?"

"That is just what I want to know. That prisoner was secured so that he could not possibly get off without help, and I am inclined to believe that this fellow has helped him."

"No, I swear I didn't."

"How are we to know that?"

"Would I have waited all this time if I had wanted ter let him go? But I didn't want him ter git away no mor'n you did."

"And how do we know that?"

"Didn't me and Grady have a snap watchin' him?"

"Well, that's so; but, then, would he have remained all this time if he could have got clear himself?"

"Maybe he has only just been able to accomplish it," suggested Hockman. "Maybe this hope was what made him so defiant to you, Munson."

"You may be right, but, if I find out that this fellow is lying, the worse for him. He will wish the devil had taken him before he fell into my hands, I warn him."

He put away his gun.

"I ain't no fool," growled Johnny Glass, "and nuther was Ned Grady. We both stood in ter keep ther prisoner ther so long as you wanted him, fer et was good pay and nothin' ter do but eat and watch, and ther watchin' was ther dead easiest part of it."

"Yes, too easy, that is the way it has been," said Munson. "That has led to neglect, and somehow the prisoner got away. Well, if Grady lost his life it served him right. Come, Hockman, we have got to go up there. Here is all our fat in the fire, now, after all the trouble we have had, and we are no nearer the end than when we commenced."

He turned suddenly upon the man who had brought the news.

"See here," he cried.

"What is et, boss?"

"You breathe a word of what you hear said here, and you will hang higher than the goose of prosperity!"

"I ain't got no notion of tellin'; I know which side of my bread has got butter on, even if I don't know a whole heap besides. I know enough to keep my mouth shut."

"Well, see that you keep it shut, then."

The manager of the mine grabbed his hat and was ready to set forth.

"How far is it to your cage?" asked the mine owner. "You must remember that I have never been there."

"It is a good mile up the canyon," answered Munson.

"Then hadn't we better have horses?"

"Horses can't reach there, haven't I never told you that?"

"If you have I have clean forgotten it. Well, let's be off, then, for it is important."

"You go ahead and lead the way, Glass," directed Munson, "and we'll follow you. We have some private matters to talk over as we go along. Move lively, now."

Thus they started.

They could not be seen from the camp proper.

The buildings of the mine were some distance removed from the camp, on the side of the gulch.

Leaving the buildings by the rear way, they could be seen by no one, unless, perchance, by some employee around the mines. But that was of little moment, anyhow.

"You have never heard a word from that other party?" inquired the mine owner, as they proceeded.

"You mean Deadwood Dick?"

"Yes."

"Never a word."

"Then you think he was killed?"

"Thunder! can there be a doubt of it?"

"You told me his body was not found, that's all."

"Well, we never heard a word about him after he was carried off by Black Thunderer."

"I would much rather you had hanged him than taken even that risk, for there is now just that slight shadow of uncertainty in the matter, since the body was not found."

"I do not think it is worth mentioning."

"He must have been a surprised man."

"Yes, he was, you bet."

"He had no idea that any one here could get on to his identity, of course."

"Not the slightest. And, in point of fact, no one would have done so had not the sheriff of the county been kind enough to give us the tip."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Hockman. "That was something he was not figuring on. Ha! ha! ha! Why, he came to me as innocent as a lamb to consult about the capture of Captain Lucifer and his band."

"Ha! ha! ha! And he never smelt a mouse at all, and they running all over him. Oh! it was too good."

They both laughed heartily.

"But one thing," said Munson.

"What is it?"

"How did he know my name?"

"Know your name?"

"Yes. He called me by name before we put him to his death."

"I do not know. If he had escaped, knowing that you and Captain Lucifer were one and the same—"

"But he did not escape, be sure of that."

"That brings us back to the point of starting. What do you suppose became of the body?"

"It was washed down the creek, of course. Black Thunderer plunged into the arroyo, and was found there next day when some of the boys tracked him to find out what had become of him."

"But the man was not there?"

"No."

"And the rope, you told me, was broken."

"Yes; but nothing strange about that, considering that Black Thunderer carried a small tree down into the arroyo with him."

"Then your theory is—"

"No theory about it. The trail was perfectly plain. The black devil plunged straight ahead to the arroyo, fouled with a tree growing on the very brink, and tumbled in, carrying tree, man and all with him."

"And that broke the rope?"

"Certainly. There was a mark where the man's boots had dragged through the fresh ground where the tree was uprooted. Growing on the edge of the arroyo, it hadn't a great deal of support, and the weight of the horse carried it over and down."

"And you found the tree, of course?"

"No; it had drifted away, for it was just after that hard rain, and the stream was running full."

"Well, he must be dead, of course, for he had not a chance in a million of coming off with his life, from what you have told me about it. Still, I wish you had put a bullet into his brain."

Their conversation ran to greater length than we can possibly quote—in fact, not all of it would be in line with the purpose of our story. It continued until in due time they arrived at their destination, where, near the entrance to a sort of cavern, lay the body of Ned Grady.

Inside were found the chains, secure to the rock walls, that had so recently held their prisoner, and they were found, upon examination, to be intact in every part. They were locked, in places, and not even the locks had been disturbed. The three looked at one another, not knowing what to make of it. How had George Grill made his escape?

CHAPTER VI. VENGEANCE VOWED.

"Wull, stranger, what's ther matter wi' you?"

It was just growing dusk, and the lights were beginning to appear in the various windows in the village of Silver Bullet.

In the westward, ho! of civilization, this place, once a camp, had become, as we have called it, a village of the most respectable and orderly and orthodox type.

True, some of its citizens could recall the days when it was young—when it had been in the midst of the then true West; but those days had long since gone by. One of these was the man whom we have just quoted, and the man he addressed was certainly a stranger there.

He was a thin, gaunt man, with long hair and beard, and his keen black eyes

seemed aglow with more than natural fire.

He had evidently just come into the village, and he stood knocking at the door of a cabin.

Cabins there were, some three or four here and there about the place, reminders of former days. This one was the neatest of the lot, and was inclosed in a yard where flowers were blooming, although there were no signs that they had had recent care.

The old citizen, as he put the question, had stopped at the gate.

The other leaned against the door-post.

"Does no one live here?" the stranger asked.

"No, no one lives ther now," the old citizen answered. "I knowed ye didn't know et, ther way ye was a-poundin'; and that's ther reason why I asked ye what was ther matter, as I kem along. Ther family went away nigh onto a month ago, I sh'u'd say."

"The family—"

The man seemed to gasp rather than speak the words, and he leaned the more heavily against the door.

"Thet was what I said, stranger, ther family. Some relation of your'n, mebby. Never heerd George Grill say much about his relations, but he must 'a' had some, of course. Yas, he moved off with his wife and chick about ther time stated and—but, good Lord! what's ther matter?"

With a moan, the man had sunk down to the steps.

The old citizen opened the gate and hastened in, and, stooping down, he lifted the stranger's head.

"What is et, stranger? Aire you sick? Shall I help ye to ther hotel and git a doctor? No? Then jist tell me what ter do, and I'll do et."

"Joe, don't you know me?" the man asked.

"Know ye? Blame me fer a lunk ef I know ye, stranger. And yet, them ther eyes of your'n—Ef et wasn't that George Grill—"

"I am George Grill—"

"You?"

"Yes. In the name of heaven, tell me what has become of my wife and child. Joe, Old Joe, Old Joe Wilford—you see I know you well enough; don't look at me like that. Where is Mary? Where is my boy?"

The old man was passing his hand over his eyes in a dazed fashion, as if trying to find out whether he was awake or dreaming. He looked the man in the eyes again, searchingly. It was some moments before he could bring himself to speak.

"Man alive, it can't be!"

"I tell you it is so; I am George Grill. Am I so changed that you don't know me even yet? Well, I hardly wonder."

"You aire changed, boy, greatly changed, but I would know ye well enough ef—ef— Thunder, ef you aire George Grill, then who was that other? Is thar two ov ye?"

"Two of me?"

"Thar sartainly is, boy, sartainly is. And one of ye must be false, that is ekally certain. Is et you?"

"Old Joe, have I got to prove my identity to you? Say, don't you remember the day that we cornered the bear over on the forks? And don't you remember the scratch old bruin gave me on the arm—"

"Enough, boy, enough, enough! Et is ther other cuss that is false, and you aire ther true George Grill. But, thunderation! who kin 't'other one be, I wonder? And—and—Blazes a-burnin'! what

does et all mean, anyhow? He was hyer in your name, and your wife went off with him fer you—. Say, show me that thar arm ther b'ar scratched fer ye, ef ye kin."

Pale to the lips, hardly able to stand, seemingly, the bearded man pulled up his left sleeve and displayed his arm.

"Beg yer parding, boy," said the old man, slowly. "Et is you; but in the face of all that's gone afore, I had ter make sartain of it. Now, who in ther name of greatness was t'other feller?"

"You thought it was I?"

"As much like ye as yer own twin brother could be, I should say."

"And he was here as George Grill—he was received by my wife as her husband—he has now taken her away? My God!"

He sank down again, burying his face in his arms.

The old man sat down beside him, placing his hand on his head and trying to comfort him.

The gathering darkness favored them, being back a distance from the street and under the shadow of the little porch over the cabin door. They were not likely to be disturbed.

"Et is as you have said, boy, jest as you have said," the old man spoke gently.

"And you don't know where they have gone?"

"No, I do not know."

"Does anybody know?"

"Not a soul hyer at Silver Bullet, anyhow."

"You are sure of that? I must make close inquiries and find a clew somehow."

"Et won't be ther least bit of use, George, boy. We have done that ourselves already, out of curiosity, but not a sign kin be found. You see, et was a queer way fer George Grill to go away."

"Did they sell the cabin?"

"No, but et is nailed up as if they didn't have no idee of returnin'."

"My God! My God!"

"Thar, thar, George, boy, don't take on like that. I know et is hard on ye, but—but—"

"Hard! It will kill me, Joe. Where is she—where is my wife? Who is the man who has so cruelly deceived her? God of Heaven! if I meet him I will have his life for this!"

The old man recoiled a step, so vengeful the words were hissed.

"Can't blaime ye, boy; can't blaime ye a bit. Et is ther queerest thing I ever heard of in all my born days. Thar ain't no doubtin' you are George Grill, after seein' that arm, but neither did anybody doubt t'other feller. He was George Grill, too."

"What can it mean, what does it mean? How long was he here, Joe? I want to know all you can tell me about it."

"Must 'a' been nigh onto three months, I should say. He was brought hyer more dead than alive, and your wife nussed him through till he got well. She had waited and watched a year fer you, and when he was brought home to her she nigh about went wild wi' joy."

A great sob from the younger man caused the other to stop.

"Who brought him here?" was eagerly asked. "Where was he found. What made them think it was me? Tell me everything, Joe, everything you know about it."

"Why, a party of men from hyer found ve. more dead than alive, fast in a tree that had drifted down ther river to whar they war camped. Ye wur tied with a rope—I mean him, of course—he

was tied with a rope, one arm bein' free but t'other fast to his side, and ther rope was caught fast to a part of ther tree. They knowed ye—him, and he was brought right hyer."

"In the name of heaven, who can it be?"

"That is ther question."

"But, I will know, curse him! I will know, and then let him look out. I will show him no more mercy than I would show to a wolf—no more than I will show to Melvin Munson, when next we meet. He has deceived my wife, he has usurped my name and place, and— Ha! it must be Melvin Munson's work!"

"George, thar is one thing that strikes me as queer, now."

"What is that, Joe?"

"Yer wife."

"What about her?"

"Are ye dead sartain that she was as true as ye thought—"

The younger man straightened up, and even in the fast-gathering darkness the glint of his flashing eyes could be seen plainly.

"Old Joe, have a care," he warned. "You know my Mary, and I want to ask you if you can doubt her. Can you? She has been deceived, I tell you, and for a purpose. Is it not so?"

"Et must be so, pard."

"Do you doubt her?"

"Wull, no; and yet et is mighty queer that she wouldn't 'a' found out, in all that time that et wasn't you. That is a knot that I can't cut through, no way I try et."

George Grill's chin sank upon his breast.

There was more real reason in what the old man had said than he wanted to admit in his heart.

For some moments neither spoke, and then George Grill broke the stillness. His voice was husky, and he took the old man by the hand.

"Old Joe, no one but you knows that I am here, and to no one but you, perhaps, could I prove who I am. Keep my secret. I am going to find her—them, and I want you to go with me. Will you come?"

"Boy," and the old man's grip tightened upon his hand, "et is a good while since these hyer old legs have traveled, but I am with ye, heart and soul. We'll find 'em, ef et takes us a year to do et. You have been wronged, and yer wrongs must be righted."

They went in the direction of the old man's cabin, talking earnestly and confidentially.

CHAPTER VII.

COLD CANYON'S BOOM.

Cold Camp had suddenly taken on a new boom.

A new gold discovery had been made, and one that promised to eclipse entirely the first.

People were thronging into the gulch every day, brought thither by the reports, and the population had suddenly outgrown the possibilities of accommodation in the young city.

Tents and slab shanties were being erected everywhere where a foothold could be obtained, all up the sides of the gulch and along its length in both directions. While called a canyon, and while such it properly was, it here widened to considerable dimensions.

The "Big Nig" mine had been the pride of the region.

It had been, too, as we have elsewhere stated, the excuse for the existence of Cold Camp.

But now the new find—"Great

Glory"—it was called, owing to the fact that those words had been the first spoken when the find was made—promised to carry away the honors.

The discoverer was one Richard Fenton, a newcomer into the canyon, who had given his handy name as Gold Dick, an appellation that had been given him, he had declared, owing to the fact that he was a veritable ferret at finding gold where any was to be found.

He had come there with his wife and one child, a poor man to all appearances, and had obtained work in the Big Nig.

A roughly-dressed man, he wore a stubby beard that never appeared to grow any longer, and that certainly was never trimmed shorter. He had taken possession of a deserted cabin high up the gulch wall on the north side, and little was seen of his wife.

When not at work this fellow employed his time in prospecting, during every minute of daylight he had at his disposal, and at last the result was the discovery of the Great Glory.

It was kept secret, at first, and nothing was known of it till the papers had been duly filed.

Dudley Hockman was the first one to make it known at Cold Camp.

He came there one day, from the county seat—where he was supposed, as sheriff, to be located, and hastened at once to the Big Nig office to find his representative.

"Why, what's the matter?" cried Munson, at sight of him. "Have you found George?"

"Curse George, and everything else!" was the fierce response.

"Then is it possible that Dead—"

Another oath.

"Who is the fellow that has found a new mine here in my gulch?" he hotly demanded. "That is what's the matter!"

"New mine?" gasped Munson.

"Yes, a new mine. Don't stand and stare as if you didn't know what I am saying. A new mine, with the company already formed, with a capital of a half a million—"

"Whew! You are joking—"

"No joke about it. Do you know the man, one Richard Fenton?"

"Dick Fenton, or Gold Dick, as he is called? He is one of our employees here, at laborer's wages."

"Then he can't be the man, certainly. Is there no other Richard Fenton here? There must be, for that is the name, and the business has been done as straight as a string."

"There is no other Fenton here, and he certainly can't be the man."

"And has nothing been heard of it here?"

"Not a word."

Hockman walked up and down the office, muttering curses under his breath.

"Where is this fellow?" he suddenly demanded, stopping short. "Send for him, and let's see whether there is anything in it, far as he is concerned. If not, some one is using his name."

Richard Fenton was sent for at once.

In a few minutes he came into the office, begrimed with dirt, his hat in his hands, respectfully.

He was not a savory-looking fellow, besmeared with clay and dirt as he was, but his arms, bared to the elbows, were literal bundles of muscle, and he had a strong neck.

"You want me?" he asked.

"What is your name?" demanded Hockman.

"Dick Fenton, sir."

"You are an employee in this mine—but, let us pass that. Are you the fel-

low who recently made a discovery here in this gulch?"

"Well, I have made a discovery of gold, sir, if that is what you mean. I never fail to find it, if there is any to be found, but it has always been stolen away from me, and—"

"Stolen from you—when you have discovered it on other men's ground, as in this case, perhaps."

"Sometimes that way."

"And this time that way, too, though it will be no stealing. This gulch, and all in it, belongs to me, and if you have found any of my gold, that is mine, too."

The employee stood turning his hat around and around in his fingers, as if nervous.

"I have taken care this time, sir," he said, modestly.

"What do I care how much care you have taken? Don't I tell you that the whole gulch is mine, and that I own everything in it?"

"You didn't own that strip, though," said the laborer, calmly. "It belonged to Henry McCasson—"

At mention of the name, both men paled and looked at each other.

"What do you know about Henry McCasson?" demanded Hockman. "Who was he, and what belonged to him?"

"I guess it is needless to tell you who he was. As to what I know about him, that is another matter. I know that this valley belongs to his rightful heirs."

The two men glared like tigers.

They looked at one another, and then again at the man before them.

"Supposing, just for argument—I don't admit it, mind you, but supposing it, how do you claim to own your new discovery here?" demanded Hockman.

"First, sir, by right of discovery; and, second, by right of having bought the land from Henry McCasson's heir—"

"Thunder and lightning!"

Even that did not disturb the clay-stained laborer, who was still turning his hat in his hands.

"What do you know about McCasson's heirs?" the mine owner demanded.

"Where are they, and who are they? But you as much as said there is only one. Who is it?"

"What does that matter, so long as my title is clear?"

"It matters a good deal, sir."

"How?"

"You have still got me to fight. I don't admit your right to take a foot of ground anywhere in this canyon."

"I have bought it, not—"

"That don't matter a straw, you can't have it! I am sole owner here, and I mean to remain so! Besides—"

"Besides what?"

"You are an employee of mine, and what you have discovered, belongs to me for that reason, even if there was no other."

"You are talking idly, now, sir. You cannot alter the facts in the case. As a public officer of this county, you ought to be better posted."

The two men glared at the employee as if they would relish eating him, dirt and all.

"Why didn't you come to me when you made this discovery?" demanded Hockman. "Or come to my manager? We would have treated you handsomely and made it to your interest."

"I preferred my own way, sir. I have no doubt you know all about the transaction, if you have just come from town. Our company is formed, and I am at the head of it. In a few days we expect to begin operations—that is to say, we will break ground."

"And meantime, what in thunder are

You doing working with pick and shovel?"

"As a blind, sir. I will continue the balance of the week—"

"Not another minute, do you hear?"

"As you please."

"What is more, it is war between me and your company. You shall not enter the canyon, in the first place, and if you do, you will get fired out again. It is war to the death!"

"It will be a war of your making, then, sir."

"You are right it will, and I will see that it is carried to the finish, too; do you understand that? War to the death!"

Hockman was furious, and was not careful in his threats. For the moment he appeared to forget that he was sheriff of the county, and that his duty was on the side of law and order.

"Very well, I now know what to expect, then," said Fenton, stepping toward the door. "I am in the right, and if necessary, will call on the sheriff to protect me in my rights. If there is any matter for the courts to settle, that can be carried on quietly."

With that he opened the door and went out, leaving the monarch and his man glare at each other and indulge in oaths galore. And thus, was the beginning of the spread of the report that another great find had been made in Cold Canyon.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAYING A SCHEME.

Hockman had found that his hands were more than tied.

In the first place, he knew, better than any one else, perhaps, that there was a question to his title.

Then, secondly, he was sheriff of the county, and that held him to his duty of office, inasmuch as he had his eye upon higher honors further ahead, and could not afford to kick over the traces.

So it was that the new concern was allowed to start, make its beginning, and so it was that people began to pour into the canyon from every direction under the sun. It needed but the mention of a "find," and there were prospective "finders" by the hundreds.

But if Hockman could not act openly, he could act secretly.

The terror of that country, for some time past, had been an outlaw who was known as Captain Lucifer.

Every effort had been made to run him down, but without avail. He was here to-day, yonder to-morrow, and no detective had yet been found who could keep him in sight long enough to take him.

Rumor had it that even the renowned Deadwood Dick had tried and failed, and not only so, but that he had lost his life in the bargain. Sheriff Hockman was authority for that. Dick had come to him, had received all the information he could furnish, and had not been heard of since.

Judge, then, of the excitement it occasioned, when, about the time the camp began to boom under the new impulse, Captain Lucifer was heard of not far off, and the greater excitement when he actually appeared at Cold Camp.

He held up the stage one night, not a mile from camp, and robbed it of the pay money belonging to the mines.

It was not only excitement, but fear as well.

And well grounded.

Captain Lucifer had left a red trail wherever he had roamed, nothing stayed his hand, and if now he had his eye on Cold Camp, woe betide it.

So agreed those who claimed to know anything about it, and the theory was supported by Melvin Munson, as acting mayor, who organized a little company to stand ready to cope with the outlaw band at a moment's notice.

So matters stood.

Work on the new mine was going forward apace, and other prospectors were working the canyon for other finds.

Gold Dick had charge of the Great Glory, and was handling his force of men like a born manager, to the secret admiration of even those who opposed him in his claim.

He still dressed as roughly as ever, was still as untidy and unkempt, but he evidently had the brains to carry out what he had undertaken. As for his wife, she stuck close to the cabin, and was seldom or never seen. There was a mystery somewhere.

One night Dudley Hockman came into the camp at a late hour.

He had been absent for some time, and Munson had been looking for him every day and every hour in the day.

He now came, and found his man in the Snug Snap saloon.

Munson rose to meet him.

The saloon, by the way, was filled to its doors, almost, and the air was blue with smoke.

So great had the increase of population been that places of entertainment had not been able to keep pace, and hence the Snug Snap was a little too snug, of an evening.

Munson had managed to reserve a couple of chairs in one corner, and he straightway conducted his liege lord thither.

They sat down.

"Well?" demanded Munson, in a low tone, "what word?"

"Your guess was right, ten to one it was. We can put our hand on him again any minute."

"I was sure of it. He is in part disguise, going around as he does, but when you take all the circumstances into consideration, there you have him."

"Yes, there can hardly be a doubt of it."

"You went to Silver Bullet?"

"Yes; am just back from there."

"What did you learn that is of interest?"

"I took pains to inquire as little as possible."

"But enough to get what you wanted, of course?"

"I got it with scarce any inquiries at all. I met a fellow who was willing to talk, and I let him tell me."

"Well, what did you get?"

"About this: That George Grill did reach there, somewhat under the weather, and that he and his wife and child closed up shop as soon as he got his strength, and have struck out for parts unknown."

"You got none of the particulars?"

"Wasn't that enough to get? What more would you want?"

"I thought maybe you would get the date of his leaving, if not a full detail of everything."

"I got enough for our purpose, and came away. Not half a dozen men saw me there, and only one of those knew what I wanted—doubtful if he knew more than that I mentioned Grill."

"Your man did not know where they had gone?"

"He said no one knew."

"Nor when they would return?"

"The cabin was nailed up, and it did not look as if they intended to go back very soon, if at all."

"What do you think, then?"

"That we are on the right track."

"And that this fellow Fenton and George Grill are one and the same?"

"Yes."

"Well, that was my suspicion. He goes dressed so rough that you can hardly get the likeness, but his eyes tell the tale."

"To say nothing of the fact that he has a wife and child here with him. We are on the right track again, Munson, and we must make sure of him and put him to the torture."

"Will it be safe, now?"

"Why not?"

"See the backing he has here now."

"He will have more, if we don't strike at once. If we can only get away with him secretly, that is all we ask for."

"Here is work for Captain Lucifer, I take it."

"Lucifer is about the right person, I should say," with a grim tinge of humor.

"Well, when is it to be done?"

"Why not to-night?"

"No reason that I know of."

"The sooner the better. It is plain that he has not gone to the hiding place yet."

"How do you know that?"

"The papers would have been entered, had he secured them."

"How else did he learn what he knows about Henry McCasson, though? I fail to see that."

"He had to know about him in order to know the secret at all, don't you see? That part of it is simple enough, to my mind."

"Yes, yes, you are right, of course. Well, do you say to-night?"

"Yes, let it be to-night."

"Enough said. I will make the preparations, and George Grill will find himself back again in his chains before morning."

"It is a wonder to me that place has not been discovered ere this."

"Quite evident that it has not, however."

"So I suppose, or it would have been talked of."

"You see, it is difficult of access, and that makes it all the more secure."

"But, with so many prospectors around, it is likely to be discovered at any moment, and it will not do to keep him there long."

"We will have no need to keep him long. Torture will make him tell what he knows, and then it will be an easy matter for Captain Lucifer to put out his light forever, and who will be the wiser?"

"I guess that is about the size of it."

"Of course it is."

Their conversation ran on to some length, but was concerning things foreign to our story from that point.

CHAPTER IX.

RATHER ODD COUPLE.

It used to be said of Creede when that town was in its morning flush as a mining camp, that "It's day all day in the daytime, and there is no night in Creede."

Just about this time the same could well have been said of this town, or camp, of which we write. It was crowded full with men and women of every sort, almost, and it may safely be added that the evil sorts predominated. Where they had all come from, no man could have divined.

The proprietor of the Snug Snap was just about in despair. He had more custom than he could attend to. It had been his habit to complain of dull times and lack of business, and he had wished that things might "pick up a bit;" but they had improved at such a rate that

he had not been able to keep pace. What was worse, he now saw a rival building, a place four times the size of his.

That, however, was of no moment.

The new place was in the process of building; the Snug Snap was at present the best of its kind in the camp, and it had the patronage.

It was crowded to the doors, as said, and the air was heavy with smoke, spite of the fact that the windows were open and the cool night air was playing through.

Not that they were open wide; that would have been too much of a coolness for even Cold Camp.

As a rule, the denizens preferred things hot.

A dance had just ended, and the dancers were thronging to the bar, when into the place wandered two creatures not easy to describe.

One of them was old—his face and hair told that—but in spite of his age he was dressed in rather youthful attire. He wore a pants, waist, and jacket, and looked like an overgrown schoolboy.

The other was younger—his face and the color of his hair and beard declared it—but he was dressed as would have become an old man. He wore a big hat, a long coat, his vest was of an ancient pattern, and he carried a cane and walked with a slight stoop. He wore great glaring goggles.

The age of the first was fully seventy, at a reasonable estimate, and that of the latter less than half that number of years.

They paused just within the door and looked around.

The elder was the taller of the two, it might be mentioned, and he had hold of his companion's hand.

For the moment the crowd was silent, or that portion of it that saw the two men come in, and while the silence lasted the old man in the juvenile attire looked up into the face of his companion and asked:

"Dad, whur in thunderation be we, anyhow?"

The crowd broke out into a roar of laughter immediately, and the attention of the whole room was drawn.

The younger man lifted his cane and brought it down across the old fellow's shoulders with a sound whack, and, lifting his voice at the same time, he cried:

"How often have I got to warn you against swearin', son? If I hear you do it again, mark me, I'll break this hyer cane in a dozen pieces across your back! Do you mind what I'm sayin'?" And he shook his cane and his head with great emphasis.

"Yep, I mind, dad," said the old fellow, cringing as if he expected to get another cut with the cane. "I didn't go ter do et; but whur in—in—in—"

"Look out, now, sir!" lifting the cane and shaking his head terribly at the "boy."

"Whur in misery be we?" the old fellow got it out.

The crowd was laughing; so that but few of its number overheard all that was said, but all could see the actions.

The hair and beard of the younger man were trimmed all around just even with the collar of his coat, and it would have been hard to tell just what to liken him to.

Said one man:

"He looks like a cross 'tween a parson and a woman's rights suffragist, he bein' ther sufferer."

We might attempt a closer description and spoil it, so we may as well let that stand. He certainly was a peculiar-look-

ing specimen of the genus homo, to say the least.

"That is what I want to know myself, my son," said the pretending parent, putting his cane under his arm and looking around the room. "Will some gentleman be good enough to tell me the name of the place we have arrived at? Not that I want to trouble you, but I'd like to know."

"You aire at Cold Camp, sir," said the proprietor, from his place behind the bar.

"Yes, sir, I am aware that it is cold, but what is the name of the place, sir?"

Another laugh at that.

"I tell you it is Cold Camp, that's what it's called."

"Ah! yes, I see. Well named, too, by the chill I felt as I came down through the canyon."

"That's Cold Canyon, to save ye ther trouble of askin'," was the information volunteered.

The old fellow in the boyish dress was acting as if frightened, at so much attention turned upon him, and was clinging to his parent "for all he was worth," as the common saying has it.

The crowd was much amused, and had pressed them into a confined circle in front of the bar.

"Well named, well named," said the pretending old man. "Don't crowd, gentlemen; please don't crowd; you will frighten my boy and make him cry if you do."

Catching right on to the humor of it all, the crowd whooped itself fairly hoarse.

"Is there a school here in your town?" the parent asked.

"No, no school," some one stopped laughing long enough to respond.

"Then ye aire a schoolmaster, aire ye?" some one else asked. "Thought ye looked et."

"No, no, sir, you mistake, you mistake," was the hurried rejoinder. "I am a geologist by profession. The reason I inquired for a school, I wanted to place my boy in school while I explore the region round about for specimens."

"Put him in school— Ha! ha! ha!"

"Yes, sir. You see, the little fellow gets tired when he accompanies me on my tramps, and he cries, and I have to carry him, which is no joke, seeing that he's big for his size."

And then they whooped it up again, in the merriest fashion.

The old man in the boyish suit was all the time clinging fast to the hand and coat of his make-believe parent.

His face was a picture of distress, if not indeed fright, as he looked upon the many strange faces around him. A timid boy nine years of age could not have acted the part more naturally.

Everybody was interested by this time, and everything else was for the time being forgotten.

One fellow playfully poked the "boy" in the ribs.

Instantly the wrinkled old face became a hundredfold more wrinkled, the eyes went shut and the mouth opened, and forthwith went up one of the wildest and most distressful wails that crowd had ever heard.

The "little fellow" was crying!

Wail after wail came forth from his grizzled throat, in accents wild and woe-ful, and he clung to his companion's hand and coat-tails in a terrified way. It was the most amusing sight the denizens of Cold Camp had ever beheld, and they enjoyed it to the full.

"See what you have done, now!" cried the parent, patting his boy on the head.

"You have got him started, and I'll have a time getting him quieted, I'm afraid. Will it be possible to get lodgings here for the night? I must have lodgings, of course. I am honest, and have the wherewith to pay. My name is Phineas Brown, and the boy's name is Ezekiel. There, there, Zeke, don't take on that way, or I'll have to spank you and give you something to cry for!"

The patrons of the Snug Snap had never had such a laugh in their lives before.

Most of them held their sides, while tears ran down their faces.

It was about the best thing they had ever seen.

As it happened, there was a vacant room there at the Snug Snap, two men having given it up about an hour before to move into a shanty they had been building, and Mr. Brown and his "boy" were assigned to that apartment.

The merriment lasted for awhile after they had gone from the room, but it gradually subsided, and other events of the evening took its place. And, when the saloon had assumed its wonted tenor, Melvin Munson and Dudley Hockman rose and went out into the night.

CHAPTER X.

OPENING THE WARFARE.

"Well, what did you think of that?" demanded Hockman, as they walked away.

"A pair of fakirs," said Munson. "They have some sort of a show, or something of the kind to introduce, depend on it. Which way are you going?"

"We'll walk over to the offices. My own opinion is that there is a game behind it all, and that they are more than they really seem at the first appearance."

"That is what I said. I set them down for a brace of fakirs."

"They are more than that, depend on it."

"What do you mean?"

"What will you bet that one of them is not Deadwood Dick?"

"Get out! He is dead."

"You have no proof that he is."

"Don't it stand to reason that he is?"

"That is not proof. You never found the body."

"Do you suppose that a man could be dragged by such a horse as Black Thunderer, all the way from the end of the canyon to the arroyo, and not be killed a dozen times over? To say nothing of the fall down into the creek."

"It does not look reasonable—"

"I should say not."

"But, I was going to add, Deadwood Dick has more lives than a cat, and I will never believe him dead until I see him cold and stiff with my own eyes."

"Then you will never be convinced of it, for he was food for crows a good while ago. No, you will find that these two chaps are what I have set them down to be, and nothing more."

"Well, I hope you are right."

"What now?"

"We must plan to carry out the other matter."

"You had better leave that all to me, for you will not want to have a hand in it, openly."

"I leave it all to you, but I want to know the plans. If anything happens to miscarry, I may be able to chip in at the right time and be of some use to you."

They reached the office of the Big Nig, where for an hour or longer they remained in earnest talk.

When they were done, Hockman re-

urned to the camp, but Munson remained behind.

Gradually the lights in the shanties went out, but the saloons and other resorts kept going, and some of them would be open all the night.

One of the oldest buildings at Cold Camp was the cabin up on the side of the gulch, now occupied by Gold Dick and his wife and child.

No one had cared to occupy it, because of the climb to get to it, but it had apparently just suited its present tenant on that account. But, then, it had been the only vacant one in the camp at the time when he came there.

There was a rumor that it had once been occupied by one "Mountain Guerrilla," an outlaw who had been famous throughout that region some years before. Be that as it may, the place had no terrors for its present occupants, and it was, in point of fact, the most secure spot in the whole camp. The cabin was roomy, and had been built to stand.

It fronted on a rock plateau that overlooked the gulch.

The trail that led up to it came out in a little open space at the rear of the building.

There were three windows, but no door in the front, the only entrance being by that rear way, and by a rear door. There was a spring of water on the plateau.

Altogether, it was an ideal place for defense, and, if it had been built and occupied by the outlaw mentioned, he had shown good judgment in his selection of a site that could not be easily surprised or taken by the enemy in time of trouble.

The lights in this cabin were out, and all was still on the plateau, when half a dozen men filed up the pathway of rock that led to it.

They observed silence and caution, not one of their number spoke, and they made no sound until all had gathered at the rear door of the cabin, when the leader knocked.

They were masked, and each had a ready gun in hand.

There was a stir within immediately, and in a few seconds the rays of a light were seen.

In a few seconds more the bolts of the door were withdrawn, and a man was seen, holding a lighted candle over his head with one hand, while in the other he held a pistol.

At what he saw, he tried to close the door again, but the leader of the six had shoved his foot in the opening, and each covered the other with the gun in hand. It was a moment to test the nerves of both, and it proved that both were nervy.

"What's wanted?" demanded the occupant of the cabin.

It was Gold Dick, rough of face and appearance as ever, and he was but partly dressed.

"You are wanted," was the response. "Come with us quietly, and there will be no trouble. Resist, and it may cost you your life."

"We seem to hold about an even hand, sir," was the cool rejoinder. "If you have any business with me, state what it is, otherwise, withdraw as you came."

"You must come with us."

"I will not go."

There was the sound of the removal of bolts from another door leading from this rear room into the other part of the house.

"Do not come in here," the man of the

cabin called out. "Stay where you are, for there is danger."

"Oh! what is the matter?" a woman's voice inquired.

"Nothing, yet. Be calm, and keep your door secure."

The bolts shot into place again, and a sigh was heard.

Gold Dick had not for a moment removed his eyes from those of the masked man who confronted him.

"Come, will you obey?" the masked man asked.

"I will not. What is your business with me?"

"That cannot be told here. You must come with us."

"And I refuse to go. My wife and child would be left alone."

"They will be safe."

"They will be safer if I am here to guard them."

They had remained motionless to this moment. Gold Dick held the candle with his left hand, his pistol with his right, and the tubes of their weapons were parallel with each other.

But, in a second, all this was changed.

With his last words, Gold Dick gave the man's foot a kick that dislodged it.

In the same movement he dropped the candle and swung behind the door, giving it a push with his shoulder that caused it to close with a sharp slam, and the bolt shot into place instantly.

A muttered curse was heard without.

"What is it all about? Who are they?" So called the woman from the other room.

"It is Captain Lucifer and his band," was the whispered response through the door. "Conceal yourself and the child, and defend yourself if discovered, if they overcome me."

"My God!"

The exclamation was in a voice full of terror.

At that moment there came a great crash against the door. That was instantly followed by another.

Gold Dick fired a shot through the door, as a warning for them to desist, and an oath from without was the instant result. And in the same instant the door gave way under another terrific shock.

Into the darkened room the men tumbled, and Gold Dick's weapons barked vengefully. Two men went down; but the others threw themselves upon him.

"Curse you!" they cried, as they forced him back to the wall. "You shall pay for this, George Grill!"

"I am not George Grill," declared the single defender, struggling his hardest to break away from them.

"You are George Grill, and you are going back where you came from—do you understand?"

"You are making a mistake, I tell you. My name is Fenton."

"At present it is. Curse you, surrender, or I will jam ten inches of cold steel into you!"

It was useless to resist further, and so, panting, Gold Dick ceased his struggling, and in the next moment they had secured his arms.

One of the men on the floor was moaning, but the other was still, evidently dead. Not a thing could be seen, for it was inky darkness within the confines of that room.

Not a sound came from the other part of the cabin. The woman had evidently obeyed the directions she had received. And there, in the darkness and silence—silence save for the moaning of the man on the floor and the mutterings of the others—was Gold Dick, a prisoner.

CHAPTER XI. ONCE AGAIN DOOMED.

"What is to be done with him?" one of the men demanded.

They were only four in number, now, fit for active work. One was dead, and the other wounded.

"You well know what is to be done with him," was the response. "The first thing is to get away from here with him, and to the—you know where. And the others must be taken."

"The woman and—"

"No, no, pard. They can't be left here."

"What do you intend doing with me?" asked the prisoner, with great coolness.

"You know well enough, without asking that, George Grill. Only know this, that it is for life, this time."

"I tell you again that I am not George Grill."

"Bah! we know you are."

"I swear that I am not."

"Useless. You cannot hope to gain anything by that. Are you ready, boys?"

"Yes."

"Two of you carry the man who is dead, and the other assist the one who's wounded. I can't tell who is who, in this blackness."

"But thar is the woman," spoke up one of the fellows.

"What about her?"

"She will squawk wuss'n a stole hen as soon as we go, and bring ther hull camp around us."

"Blazes!"

"We must make sure of her."

"Yes, she must be found, and made secure before we go. Who has got a match?"

One of the men struck a match, and finding the candle on the floor, it was speedily lighted, and the scene was revealed.

On the floor lay two men, one still and the other writhing. The mask of one was partly dislodged, but one of the other four quickly pulled it over the fellow's face again.

Their prisoner was looking at them searchingly.

"Ha! I was not mistaken," he suddenly ejaculated.

"What do you mean?" the ringleader demanded.

"Never mind what I mean. I have made a discovery."

"Little good it will do you. Here, boys, gag this fellow before we go any further, or he may give us trouble."

That done, and quickly enough, they next tried the door that led to the other part of the cabin, but it was secure, and would not yield under their efforts, nor did knocking bring any response.

"This is strange," muttered the leader.

"She has got out some other way," said one of the men.

"Impossible. This is the only door to the cabin, this rear one."

"Then she is hidin', that's et, hopin' that we'll go and give her the chance she wants."

"We must know about that. Break down the door. Hello! here is a bed in the kitchen. What does this mean? The kitchen is a queer place to sleep in, when there's better rooms."

He looked at the prisoner.

"Et is a single bunk," one of the men called attention. "Looks as if this hyar feller slept hyer alone. Un-gag him and ask him."

"No, it don't matter," said the leader. "Break open that door, and let us find where the woman is."

It was easier to order than to do, as they found.

The door did not seem likely to yield to them, and Captain Lucifer looked around for a weapon.

There was an axe in one corner of the kitchen, and he seized that and sprang again to the attack. In a few moments, then, he had the door open, and they hastened into the other part of the cabin.

All save one, who remained to guard their prisoner.

They were gone some minutes, and when they did return it was with muttered curses.

No trace of the woman and child had they been able to discover, and it was taken as evidence that she must have escaped from the cabin somehow.

They had seen no place where she could be in hiding.

"We have got to get out of this," cried Captain Lucifer. "She may be half way to the camp by this time, and we'll have to hustle to escape a brush with Melvin Munson and his picked lot."

"Yes, you are right."

They clearly had not heard Gold Dick's directions to the woman, and now thoroughly believed that she had gone from the cabin.

Captain Lucifer himself took charge of the prisoner, leaving the others to bring the dead man and their wounded companion. He put a pistol to Gold Dick's head, saying:

"Now, you walk lively, and without giving me trouble, or I'll drop you by the wayside."

He clearly meant it, and the prisoner could only obey.

The others came after, cursing roundly.

Thus they filed down to the gulch bottom, and thence along to the west and into the canyon.

Going perhaps a mile, they came finally to a place where the two who were carrying the dead man came to a halt, and the wounded man was allowed to lie down.

He had been begging that privilege ever since the start.

"We can't carry this load no furder, captain," said one of the men.

"What will you do with it, then? You can't leave him here, for he will be known, when found."

"We kin bury him, while you go on with yer prisoner."

"Yes, you can do that. One of you come with me, and the rest remain and do that."

So they hurried on, Captain Lucifer and this one, with the prisoner, and made all haste to the place of their destination.

It was a hard climb to an out-of-the-way spot, but they got there at last.

They entered a kind of cavern, or tunnel.

"Here we are," cried Captain Lucifer. "Does the air smell natural to you, George Grill? Wait, we will have a light, and you can tell then whether it looks familiar."

The prisoner, gagged, could not respond.

After some moments a battered old lamp was found and lighted, and the place was revealed.

The prisoner looked all around, and a feeling of disgust took possession of him. Something like a chill seized him, when he caught sight of some chains secured to one of the walls.

"Well, does it seem like home?" Captain Lucifer demanded.

"How do ye expect him to answer?" asked the other villain.

"Ha! sure enough. Remove the gag."

This was done.

"Now, then, answer my question," ordered the outlaw chieftain.

"I cannot say that it looks like home, seeing that I have never been here before," said the prisoner.

"What is the use of your holding out, George Grill?"

"That is not my name."

"Bah! You escaped from here; you went home to Silver Bullet; you left there with your wife and child, and you came here to Cold Camp and located under an assumed name. Don't I know you?"

"You certainly do not, sir. That is not my name."

"Don't take us for fools. You came back there with the hope of winning your revenge, no doubt, but you see we have nipped you in the bud, as it were. I do not know how you managed your escape before, leaving your chains intact and locked, but, depend on it, you won't escape again."

"You puzzle me, sir."

"I will puzzle you worse, to get out of here after I am done with you. Are you willing yet to reveal that secret?"

"What secret, sir?"

"Pth! You disgust me! You almost tempt me to strike you, bound as you are. You know the secret I am after, and for which you were held here in these chains more than a year. I promise you that you will not remain so long this time. Do you know what plan I am going to adopt with you now?"

"How can I? I know nothing of what you are talking about."

"Et would serve him right to shoot him!" cried the other man.

"You are right it would," was agreed. "I am almost tempted to do it, too."

"There is some terrible mistake here," said the prisoner. "Here are two facts: I am not George Grill, and I was never in this hole before in my life; make what you please of it."

Captain Lucifer leaped forward, as if he would strike him, but he did not do so.

"You are bound, or I would knock you to the floor!" he hissed. "You have tried my patience to the last degree. I am going to put you in these chains, and here you will be left for twenty-four hours. At the end of that time, if you are not ready to speak, you will be put to torture and the truth will be forced out of you. Nothing shall change my purpose."

"It will be useless," was the calm rejoinder. "What I do not know I cannot tell, that is certain."

"We'll see about that, curse you!"

The chains were unlocked, and were put around the prisoner's body and tightly secured there, and thus he was left. Deadwood Dick was in a desperate dilemma again, in the hands of the very man who had once before doomed him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DISCOVERY OF A CRIME.

Morning dawned.

Cold Camp awoke to the duties of another day.

When Melvin Munson made his appearance that morning he glanced up at the cabin on the plateau.

Nothing had been seen or heard of the woman, and he was greatly at loss to understand what it meant. Where was she? Why did she not give the alarm?

Dudley Hockman, too, was out early, and Munson sought him as soon as he appeared, and immediately after they had breakfasted they set out for their office.

They had conversed in low tones about the matter while eating.

"No, sir, I'm hanged if I understand it," Munson declared aloud, soon as they entered the office.

"Something must have happened to her, that is certain, or nothing would keep her from rushing down here and giving the alarm. I am eager to know what can be the matter."

"We'll have to wait."

"Wait for what?"

"For the alarm."

"But, she don't give it."

"No, no, I mean the other; don't you understand?"

"I guess I don't. Speak right out; don't talk in riddles when you talk to me."

"No riddle about that. When Gold Dick does not appear at the Great Glory his men will want to know where he is and what is the matter, and some one will be sent up to the cabin."

"Ha! now I comprehend."

"He will be missing, the broken doors and the blood will be discovered, and the deuce will be to pay and no pitch hot."

"I see, I see. And then they will appeal to me, I'll call you out with your picked body of peacemakers, and the case will have to be investigated. Then we'll perhaps find the woman."

"That is just it. We have got to wait."

They waited with what patience they could, and watched the cabin on the ledge from the office windows.

Within the hour they saw a couple of men belonging to the Great Glory climbing up the ledge path that led to the cabin, and watched them until they reached the plateau.

They disappeared behind the cabin.

"Now for it," whispered Hockman.

"Yes, now for it; and we will be greatly surprised when we hear of it. We'll wait for them to bring the news to us."

They continued watching, and in a few moments the two men reappeared in the greatest haste from the rear of the cabin and ran to the edge of the plateau, where they waved their hats and were evidently shouting.

No sound of their voices reached the ears of the two men in the office of the Big Nig, but they could guess closely what their shout was.

A full view of the camp could not be had from the Big Nig.

This has been stated before.

It was not until a body of men ran out from the direction of the Great Glory, and approached the side of the gulch where the cabin stood, that the two watchers could see anything more.

They then witnessed wildest gesticulating on the part of the two men on the plateau, and the crowd below showed greatest excitement.

There was a little delay; then a rush was made for the office of the Big Nig.

"Ha! now they are coming!" exclaimed Munson.

"Yes, and now for it."

"Be natural, when they arrive here."

"Do not trouble yourself about me; see that you are cool."

"Ha! ha! ha! That is a pretty good one, Sheriff Hockman, a pretty good one. But let it pass."

They turned away from the windows, and Munson opened the safe and got out a book. When the men burst into the office he and Hockman were busily consulting.

"Hello!" cried Munson. "What's the matter, boys?"

"Blazes is to pay," cried the spokesman for the crowd. "There has been a murder done up at Gold Dicks cabin."

"Murder!" cried the two men in the same breath.

"Yes, a murder."

"Who has been killed?" demanded Hockman.

"Gold Dick, and mebby his wife and child; we don't know fer sure."

"Great heavens! How did you find it out, my man?"

"Why, he didn't come to work, and we couldn't go ahead without him, so we sent up to the cabin—"

"And he is there dead?"

"No, not a hair of him. Ther two men hollered down to us; that is as far as we know yet."

"But what do they say?"

"They say nobody is thar, but ther doors aire broke in, and that thar's blood on ther floor in two places."

"This looks serious," said Hockman. "We must go up there at once, Munson, and see what can be made of it. If a murder has been done, there shall be a hanging, I swear it."

They all hurriedly left the office and hastened toward the path that led to the plateau.

By this time the whole camp had been alarmed.

Men and women by the hundreds stood under the cliff, looking upward, and nearly every face was blanched.

Some one among them had mentioned the name of Captain Lucifer, and that was enough to cause them to pale. If that mysterious, ruthless murderer was around, who would suffer next?

The mayor and his bower led the way and hastened up in the direction of the cabin, where the two men who had gone before were awaiting their coming. And, as they went along, they noted now and again a drop of blood, on each one of which they were careful to step.

The other two had evidently not noticed these.

By the time they reached the cabin, with all the crowd at their heels, every trace of that trail had been obliterated.

What might have served as a clew for a detective had thus been purposely rubbed out. It was a case that was likely to end in mystery—it certainly would, if left to the two arch villains.

Reaching the cabin, Hockman and Munson entered at once.

Others crowded in after them, until the cabin was full, and the whole plateau without was soon black with men.

There were enough there to have taken the cabin up bodily, almost, and hurled it from its resting place down into the bottom of the gulch below. They were desperate.

The sight of the blood seemed to enrage them the more, and they openly avowed their intention of taking the law into their own hands if they could get hold of the wretch who had done the deed. But the bodies, where were they? That was a puzzle.

"We must search the old cabin thoroughly," said Hockman.

"And not an inch of it must be overlooked," added Munson. "It may be the bodies have been concealed here somewhere."

Of course, their purpose was to find the woman and the child, or some trace of them.

Every part of the cabin was explored, and thoroughly, but to no purpose.

At last the two searchers gave it up.

"Well, we are stuck," said Munson, gravely.

"It looks that way, truly," agreed Hockman. "What more can we do?"

They had returned to the kitchen, after the search in the other parts of the cabin.

"Maybe somebody here can suggest something."

"We want to know what has become

of our boss; that is the thing we want to know," said the man who had acted as spokesman, on coming to the mine office for the mayor.

"And that is what we are most eager to ascertain," said Hockman, "but you can see for yourself that we are without a clew of any kind to work on. It is a mysterious matter, wholly. In fact, it is not certain at all that it was the work of Captain Lucifer, as some here seem to think."

"I agree with ye thar," said the man from the Great Glory.

His name, by the way, was Rube Smith.

"What is your idea, then?" asked the mayor.

"Well, I hain't got none, clear, but et strikes me that Gold Dick has been done up by some enemy right hyer in ther camp."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Munson, though he slightly paled at the mention of it. "Or, if he had such an enemy, no one knows who it was, so we are just as much in the dark as before."

The point was discussed at length, but nothing came of it, and at last they gave over further search and descended to the gulch bottom.

Munson and Hockman were two greatly puzzled men.

There was no chance to converse on the way down, as they would like to have done, so they had to await opportunity.

Down in the bottom, the population of Cold Camp eagerly awaited news, and when informed that there was no news for them, they looked sullen and desperate enough.

Gold Dick, who had become a favorite with many people, had been murdered, and was his murderer to be allowed to escape? They argued not!

CHAPTER XIII.

COVERING THE MATTER.

The excitement was red-hot.

And the mystery of it all made it the greater.

If the bodies had been found, that would have been something, but no bodies where there.

Neither could any trail be discovered—might as well have looked for the fabled needle in the haystack as for a trail there in Cold Canyon.

Even if there had been one at first, hundreds of feet had now trampled everywhere, and it would be utterly useless to look for it. No, they were at a loss, and knew not how to turn.

Said Rube Smith:

"Et is a blamed shame, that sech a crime should be done hyer in Cold Camp, and nobody be able ter clear et up. Mayor Hockman, what is goin' ter be done about et, anyhow?"

"That is just it, Rube, what is going to be done? It will depend on such men as you to find us the clew. As sheriff of the county, I offer a reward of five hundred dollars to the man who will discover a clew that will lead to the discovery."

"I have just thought of something else," said Munson.

"What is that?" asked Hockman.

"We have been taking it for granted that Gold Dick is dead."

"What else are we to think?"

"Something else has struck me. It is a little strange that his wife and child are gone, isn't it?"

"That is one of the greatest points of the mystery."

"Just so. Well, suppose Gold Dick himself is the murderer, that he has killed some one else, and has made off with his wife and child in order to escape."

"Thunder!" cried Hockman.

"Et won't go," said Rube Smith. "Gold Dick wasn't that kind of man. Besides, he had too much at stake hyer to git up and dig out. No, sir-ee, that is out of the question."

"Then maybe you can explain it some other way," said Munson.

"I am goin' ter try to git at ther bottom of it, that I promise ye."

"Well, I only hope you will, that's all, for the good name of Cold Camp, if nothing else."

"Mercy me, mercy me," cried a voice at that moment. "You don't mean to say that a murder has been done here while we slept, do you?"

They looked in the direction of the speaker.

It was Phineas Brown, leading his ancient "boy" by the hand, and they had just come from the direction of the Snug Snap.

"Yes, that is just what has happened," said Rube Smith. "Ef you know anything about it, stranger, let out what ye know, double quick. This hyer is no time ter fool."

"Goodness bless us!" cried the stranger, filled with awe. "What do you suppose I know about it? We have just got up and breakfasted, my boy and I, and we learned of it while we were eating. Do I understand that it is a man, wife, and child?"

"Well, they are what's missin'," was the answer.

"Then it is not sure they have been murdered?"

"Et is a wonder if they ain't. Cabin doors broke in, blood on ther floor, and they not to be found."

"It is horrible!"

"That don't begin ter mention et."

"Is there any suspicion as to who did the deed?"

The stranger seemed eagerly excited, as any stranger might under like conditions.

His "boy" was holding fast to his hand, and looked as if ready to cry upon the slightest provocation.

"Wull, thar is a whisper around that it was Captain Lucifer and his gang," said Smith. "Ever heard of them?"

"Mercy on us! Then it won't be safe for us to go into the hills, my boy," speaking to the old man at his side, "if that wretch is at large in the neighborhood."

The old man looked as if he fully agreed in that view.

The other had a leathern bag hanging from his shoulder, and carried a hammer in his right hand, a true geologist's kit.

"I don't think you need be alarmed, sir," spoke up Munson. "Not at all likely that the outlaw would molest such as you. He looks for big game when he strikes."

"Then you think it would be safe for us to venture out of the camp?"

"I don't see why it won't."

In spite of the solemnity of the occasion, there was amusement at the sight of these two characters.

"If I could only have a place to leave my boy," the younger of the two mused, stroking his square-cut beard.

"No, don't ye leave me, dad," whined the old man, clinging to his hand and coat. "If you do, I'll cry, and nothin' will stop me."

The crowd laughed.

"No, no, I won't leave you," was the quick promise. "Whatever you do, don't begin to cry. By the way, gentlemen, where was this great crime committed? Which is the house?"

"The cabin up there on the shelf."

"Away up there?"

"Yes."

"And you say it was a man, wife, and child."

He was musing, still pulling at his beard, and seemed not to hear the reply.

"Too bad, too bad," he said to himself. "I have the usual amount of human curiosity about me, and I am tempted to go up there and see the place."

"Go if you want to, certainly," said Hockman. "And, as maybe you did not hear, I have offered a reward of five hundred dollars to the man who can find a clew that will lead to the solving of the mystery."

"Of no use to me, sir, that. I could not hope to discover anything, but I have to own to my share of morbid curiosity. Come along, Ezekiel."

He set off to the path that led up to the cabin, his "boy" trotting by his side.

The crowd had to laugh, but the seriousness of the occasion made it of short duration.

Hockman and Munson set off in the direction of the Big Nig.

They had taken but a few steps when Hockman turned back, and he said to Rube Smith:

"Rube, do everything you can, and if there is the slightest clew, or the slightest suspicion anywhere, come right to me with it."

"You kin rely that I mean ter do everything I kin, boss," was the response. "If thar is a stone anywhere that has not been turned, I am goin' to turn et now."

Hockman rejoined Munson, and they went on together.

Smith, looking after them, shook his head.

"Some things a feller might think ain't to be mentioned out aloud," he said in low tones to a few around him.

"What do you mean, Rube?" one of these asked.

"Wull, we know that ther men of the Big Nig ain't got no love fer ther man of ther Great Glory, don't we?"

"You don't mean to hint that—"

"No, I dont hint nothin'. Et ain't to be s'posed fer a minnit, and tharfor I said some things a feller might think ain't to be mentioned out aloud."

The group looked at one another suggestively.

Could it be possible, was their thought, that the men of the Big Nig had thus taken steps in the warfare against the Great Glory?

CHAPTER XIV.

FOUND AT LAST.

Meantime, "Phineas Brown" and his "boy" "Ezekiel" were climbing up the path to the cabin.

Others were ahead of them, some followed after them, and they met many on the way who had been up to the cliff, or plateau, and were returning, their curiosity satisfied.

As they went along they conversed in low tones, when no one was near to overhear.

"In heaven's name, Old Joe, what do you make of it?" asked "Phineas."

"Blame me ef I know, George, boy," was the response.

"Do you think these are the ones?"

"I hope not, God knows."

"But it was a man and wife and child, and from what I picked up they have been here about the right length of time."

"Yes, I have ter admit et, boy."

"And if it is my wife—My God! if it

is she, is it not proof that she was false to me?"

"Wait, George, boy, wait and see. Don't condemn until you hear, no matter what 'pearances may be. You have no right to do that. Et is a terrible mystery."

"It is a maddening mystery, old friend."

"Do you think you are safe? Do you think ther cusses didn't reckernize ye?"

"I am sure they have not recognized me, yet. I would know it, if they had. I think we are safe on that score."

"But who was the man? If it was your wife, who was he? And where are they now, if they have been killed? And if they have killed somebody else, whar aire they all the same?"

"Mystery, mystery. It is enough to drive one insane."

"Ye aire right, et is."

"Play your part; here come some of the people of the camp."

The old man grasped his companion's hand, as before and trotted along by his side in a most boyish fashion.

They had adopted a unique disguise, as will be admitted. It was one calculated to draw attention to them, yet at the same time one in complete contrast to their real purpose.

By the time they reached the cabin on the cliff, few persons were there, all having satisfied their curiosity.

They entered and looked curiously around.

Others who had followed them up the path, came in also, and what they saw hardly repaid them for their pains.

As they were eager to be with the crowd below, where all the excitement was, they made their stay short at the cabin, and on departing, left the two men resting on a stone in the rear.

"Now for it," said George Grill, when the last one had gone from sight.

"Yes, and make haste, fer no knowin' how soon more of them may come up to take a look."

"You remain here to warn me."

"How kin I do et?"

"Play your part. If any one comes this way they will stop to look at you, and that will give me time not to be caught."

"Et is a blamed fool game fer a man of my years to be playing George, boy, but fer your sake I'll do anything."

"Yes, I know you will, old friend."

So saying, George Grill entered the cabin again.

This time he could look around more leisurely, more critically, and he did so.

In the kitchen he discovered nothing, but when he passed on into the other rooms and searched there a sudden cry escaped him.

He ran to a corner where lay a woman's garment, and catching it up he stared at it with dilated eyes.

He ran back through the rooms with it to where his companion sat.

"See!" he cried. "Don't you know it?"

"Yer Mary's cape, as I live!"

"It is! It is!"

"Then et's her that was hyer."

"No longer a doubt of it. Heavens! I dare not look further."

"But ye must, boy, ye must. Nothing would hold ye back from et now, not even ther evil one himself."

"You are right, you are right. Wait for me here."

Back into the rooms the almost distracted man ran, and to the chimney-place that stood in the center of the cabin.

It was a huge affair, being provided so that fire could be had in all three

of the main rooms of the cabin—we hav said that it was a large one—and all the smoke ascended one common flue.

Pressing with his hand on the wall just within the fireplace, that portion of the wall moved in at the top and out at the bottom, revealing a set of sharp, narrow steps. Up these he quickly climbed, and down on the other side, and disappeared.

As soon as he had gone from sight the wall reassumed its natural position.

It was a clever hiding-place, truly.

Let us follow him.

On the other side was a longer flight of steps, with a rail to guide the hand, for it was as dark as Erebus.

Down these steps he passed, till he reached the bottom, and then along a passage where he stepped with greatest care until finally he came to a door in the solid rock.

Here he felt around in the darkness, but seemingly could not find what he desired.

With an imprecation, he lighted a match.

"Ha! the latch has been broken," he said to himself. "Lucky for me that I am on this side of the door, or I would be a helpless prisoner, unless there is another outlet of which I know nothing."

All around was solid rock.

This passage had been bored through the solid material of the hills.

Lifting the part of the latch that held the door, he opened the door, taking care that the latch could not again fall into its place.

Here he paused for a moment, and while he waited a whispered voice hailed:

"Dick?"

It was a woman's voice.

George Grill gave a great start, for he recognized it.

It was the voice of his wife—the wife from whom he had been held a prisoner so long.

Had she been true to him? What was she doing here? Where was the man she took him to be? Whose blood was it on the floor of the cabin? All these thoughts flashed through his mind.

"Dick?" was repeated.

"Who are you, woman?" he demanded, changing his natural voice.

There was a slight scream, and he was tempted to strike a match and have light upon the scene, but did not do so yet.

She might recognize him, spite of his altered appearance.

"Oh! sir, who are you?" she falteringly asked. "Where is my—where is my husband? Have they killed him? Tell me, tell me, I implore you, whoever you are."

"Your husband?" George Grill demanded, severely.

"Yes, yes—Mr. Fenton."

"And pray, how long has your name been Fenton, madam?"

"In heaven's name, who are you?" she almost shrieked. "Declare yourself before I go mad."

At that a child began to cry, and she tried to soothe it.

"Answer my question. Upon your answer depends your life, it may be," the woman added.

In his excitement he allowed his voice to take its natural tone.

"Heavens! Can it be? Light! light!"

Impelled by her cry, he struck a match and they looked at each other for the first time.

An instant she hesitated, then, with a scream, she ran forward and threw herself upon his breast, crying—"George, George. Found at last!"

CHAPTER XV.

EXPLANATION AND RESOLVE.

She was coldly received.

George Grill's breast heaved, his breath came hard, but he did not embrace the woman.

This she realized, the first burst of her joy over, and she drew away from him and the match died out, leaving them once more in darkness.

"You do not speak to me," she gasped. "Is it possible that I have made another mistake? Are you not George Grill?"

"I am, George Grill, madam," was the cold response.

"And do you not know me, Mary, your wife?"

"You are here as the wife of another—what is the meaning of it? Who is he? Where is he? Who has been murdered?"

"Heavens! you think me false to you? George, I am here to find you, I am playing a part to enable that noble man to avenge his own wrongs and yours and mine. Hear me, I implore."

"Go on."

"He was brought to me, George, and they all said it was you. Indeed, I thought it was you. I nursed him until his consciousness returned, and then he almost broke my heart by declaring that he was not George Grill."

"He must have looked like me, indeed."

"Yes, yes, he did—he does. Then, too, his face was all cut and bruised, and it would have been hard to tell. They all took him to be you, and I was mistaken with the rest, until he declared the truth, which he nobly and honorably did, the moment he regained consciousness. Believe me, George, believe me."

"Why are you here as his wife?"

"I have told you: We came to find you, and to avenge his wrongs and mine. He is here for the purpose of running Captain Lucifer to earth, of bringing him to justice for the crimes he has done. He is true, noble, and honorable; and, believe me, I have been true to you in word, thought, and deed. God only knows the joy I feel at finding you alive!"

She embraced him again, and this time he enclosed her in his arms and kissed her.

The child was clinging to its mother's skirt, pleading to be taken up. As soon as he had embraced his wife, the man took the child in his arms.

"Papa! My papa!" the little fellow exclaimed.

"Yes, Mary, I believe you, your greeting proves it," said George. "But what is all this mystery? Enlighten me, I beg. I went to Silver Bullet, and was almost crazed by what I heard there, that you had gone away with another man, who had assumed my name. In heaven's name, who is he?"

"He is Mr. Bristol, better known as Deadwood Dick, Jr."

"Deadwood Dick!"

"Yes."

"Great heavens! And where is he now? Quick, tell me the rest of the story."

Question and answer were asked and given as fast as words could be spoken, eagerly.

"They have captured him, believing him to be you," was the response. "They intend to kill him—I suppose they have long since done so."

"They—Whom do you mean?"

"Captain Lucifer and his band."

"Good heavens!"

"Can't you save him, George? He was so determined to find you or avenge you!"

"Do you know where they have taken him?"

"No, no. He hurried me off here to hide—he had found the retreat, and the last I heard was the fight, and then that they had him prisoner. Fearing they would take me next, I did not hesitate another minute, but came here. When I closed the door, something fell on the other side, and I could not open it again. Heavens! you do not know what I have suffered."

"I can imagine, my darling, I can imagine. Whose blood is it on the floor?"

"I do not know, but I heard the shooting. I think he killed at least one of them before they captured him."

"Then he was alone in the kitchen part of the cabin when the attack was made?"

"Yes; he slept there alone, and I and Georgie occupied the other part of the cabin. The door between was bolted, which circumstance saved me from falling into their hands."

"Did you hear anything that was said, Mary? Anything that will give me a clew to where they have taken him?"

"I heard him ask them where they intended taking him."

"Ha! And what did they say?"

"One said— You know well enough, without asking that, George Grill. Only know this, that it is for life, this time."

"Ah! I well know where he is, then. God knows I pity him."

"Can you save him?"

"Yes, and will."

"Thank God!"

"You think well of him?"

"He was determined to save you, or avenge you, and he has been so good and kind to me and Geordie."

"Yes, yes, I understand. It was his plan, then, to let people at Silver Bullet still continue thinking he was George Grill, then, was it?"

"Yes. He said it might help to find you, in some way or another. If they had killed you, to hear that you were alive would puzzle them, and maybe give him the clew. If they had not killed you, he might by the same means find you."

"And he was bold enough to come here."

"Yes, after he had been here once, and had almost lost his life at the hands of Captain Lucifer."

"Ha! then he knows him?"

"Yes, and he would have exposed him ere this, only he has been playing to get some tidings of you."

"Enough, Mary, enough. If I misjudged you, I beg your pardon humbly. I will find him, now, and if there is not a day of reckoning then, it will be a strange thing."

"And what about me?"

"Ha! I dare not rescue you, for that would make it necessary for you to tell the people of Cold Camp all that has happened."

"I can do that, and still keep the leading secret."

"Yes, but it would compromise me, for they would demand to know how I had found you, and they might accuse me of being in with Captain Lucifer. The people are in no mood to be trifled with, I tell you. They might hang me on short order."

"What then, George?"

"Are you brave enough to remain here for a time?"

"If you require it, but it is cold, and we are hungry, Geordie and I. How long must it be?"

"No longer than necessary. I will bring you food and bedding from the cabin above, if the coast is clear, and you can then make yourself to a degree comfortable."

"I will do anything you say, George, only do not fail to come to my rescue."

"You need have no fear of that, unless—"

"What?"

"But the door will not entrap you again, and if I fail to return you can make your appearance."

"You hint that you may be killed. Heavens! you must take care of your life, George."

"I fear nothing. A just God will not allow them to triumph. Their race is run now, and it rests only for me to rescue Deadwood Dick and join with him."

"But you are two against many."

"Two are a host when right is on their side. But I must hasten away, before others discover that I am for the time missing."

With fond words they parted, and the husband went up to the cabin. No one was there, and he speedily found food and bedding, which he handed down to his wife, together with a lamp.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MEN OF DESTINY MEET.

Meantime, when Munson and Hockman returned to the office, Hockman exclaimed:

"Munson, I have made a discovery. It is no use longer your trying to fool yourself with the belief that Deadwood Dick is dead."

Munson was pale.

"I have the same suspicion myself," he agreed. "I am afraid that you are right, and that this fellow Phineas Brown is no other than Deadwood Dick in disguise."

"I am just so sure of him that I am going to find out."

"How—when?"

"To-night, if no opportunity offers sooner."

"But if it is Deadwood Dick, he will be wary of us, and we will not catch him napping."

"Then we must take him unawares. He is likely to roam around in the hills, according to the part he is playing, and he must be followed and held up."

"And what then?"

"If suspicion proves correct, then he must die."

"Care must be taken so that no suspicion can fall on us. We are handling a delicate affair."

"I know we are, but it is now coming to a head. One or two bold moves, and the whole thing is done, and we are safe. But those moves must not miss, or we are in trouble."

"And we are at a point where there is no drawing back."

"No; we have got to go on."

"Well, let us keep watch of this fellow Brown, and see what his moves are."

"Yes, that we will do, and, if they are favorable to us, he will find himself held up at the end of a gun before this day passes. Anyhow, we will go for him to-night."

When George Grill came out of the cabin he found his "boy" waiting in the same place where he had left him.

Not only so, but there were several men from the town around him, and the old man was rubbing his eyes on his sleeves as if on the point of crying, and the men were laughing.

"See hyer," one of them called out at sight of George, "ye had better keep yer kid in sight, Mister Brown."

"Make 'em let me be, dad. They been plaguin' me, tryin' to make me sing, and I wouldn't do it."

"No, but he kem mighty near cryin'," declared one of the men. "What is ther

matter with him, anyhow? What makes him think he is a kid? He is ther oldest babbie that I ever seen in my life, I be blamed if he ain't. Don't you want a stick o' candy, babbie?"

"You lemme be," was the whine.

"There, there, do not mind the gentlemen, Ezekiel. They meant you no harm. Come along, and we will go down, now."

He offered his hand, and the old fellow ran and took it eagerly, and as they turned away George turned and touched his forehead, as if to say that his companion was not right in the head.

They passed down the path, and the man entered the cabin to explore it.

"I played 'em," said the old fellow, with a chuckle. "I thought you had found somethin', seein' that you didn't come right back, so I entertained 'em a little."

"And I am glad you did, Joe. I have found her."

"Then she is alive and kickin', is she? Glory! but I am glad of that!"

George quickly told the story, as it was now known to him, and the old man could hardly contain himself.

They went leisurely down to the bottom, as if nothing was hurrying them, and as if they had all day to do nothing in, and there some of the men wanted to know what they had found.

They passed some remarks with them, playing well the parts they had assumed, and presently moved away in the direction of the Big Nig.

They were seen from the office of the mine.

When they had come abreast with the office, on their way up the gulch, the door opened.

Hockman came out and greeted them, asking them if they had been able to discover anything—about the same questions the others had asked, and George made similar response.

He noted that Hockman eyed him closely, and made that remark to his companion when they passed on.

"Wull, let him," said Old Joe. "Little good et will do him."

"I know, but it makes it all the more necessary to play the part to a nicety. I am all too eager now for the end."

"Ef et has got to be played et has got to be played, George, boy, so we'll go right on and play et fer all et is worth, and in the end it will all come out right."

"I hope it will, anyhow."

They moved on slowly, George stopping from time to time and using his hammer on the different kinds of rock, now and then putting a piece in his leather bag.

So they proceeded, making it most wearisome for any one who might be watching.

At last they came to a narrow fissure.

"Here it is," said George.

"Through that crack?"

"Yes, and then a sharp climb up to a ledge that will lead to the cavern. There is another way, but that is too open for our purpose."

"All right, I am with ye, dad, only don't ye go too fast fer my old legs."

George led the way, and in a little time they had scaled the ascent and were upon a ledge.

Along this they passed, till finally they came to where a shoulder of rock offered a fine place for a man to remain on guard, and here George requested his companion to remain.

"We may be followed," he said, "and if so, here you can hold up any one who may come prowling along. It would be awkward to be taken at a disadvantage in that cavern, and, above all things, we

must take no chances of being overcome and taken prisoners."

"Go right ahead, George, boy, and rely on me."

"I know I can do that. A shot will apprise me that danger is at hand, and you can hold a score at bay here for a few moments."

"Yas, and you kin bet your life that I will do et, too. I will make 'em think that yer boy has growed a whole lot, dad, you bet I will, if they show their teeth."

Satisfied, George pressed on.

A few moments more, and he entered a cavern, where he found a man in chains.

He ran forward eagerly, and the first thing he did was to grasp the man by the hand, in spite of the fact that he was bound, and he eagerly cried:

"Thank God I have found you, Deadwood Dick! I will free you, and together we will run them to their doom!"

"Who are you?" Dick asked, in great surprise.

"I am George Grill, the man you have been searching for. I spent more than a year in these chains that hold you, until I became so lean that at last I could slip out of them—they never thought of that, nor did I, till I made the discovery."

It was question and answer, with lightning rapidity, while George worked at the locks that held the chains, and by the time the locks had been forced they had an understanding with each other.

As soon as Deadwood Dick had been freed the two shook hands, and there and then vowed the undoing of their foes.

CHAPTER XVII.

CAPTAIN LUCIFER CAPTURED.

Meantime, something was taking place out on the ledge.

George Grill had not been gone a long time from the place where he had left Old Joe when a man came sneaking along up the trail.

He was masked, and carried a gun in his hand. Clad in a dilapidated suit of overalls and Jumper, there was no possibility of his identity being discovered while his face was masked.

The old man saw him, and his eyes flashed. He drew a gun and waited for the man to come nearer before he revealed his presence.

He of the mask came on slowly, stealthily.

Old Joe was behind a shoulder of rock, as has been mentioned, and all the advantage of position was his.

Waiting until the man was at hand, he suddenly reached his arm over the projection, and the gun in his fist almost came into contact with the other's head.

"Aire you a-lookin' fer my pap?" he asked naively.

The man of the mask gave a great start, as he looked up, and was on the point of lifting his gun.

There was something in the eyes of the old fellow, and in the dangerous proximity of the gun, however, that caused him to desist, and told him that he was caught.

"Ef you aire," the old man added, "you kin wait hyer till he comes back. I know he will be glad to see ye— Thar, thar, now, don't move that way, or this hyer gun is sure to go off!"

"Who are you?" was the demand.

"What do you mean by stopping me?"

"I mean that you can't go on till my dad comes back, that is all. He told me ter let nobody pass."

"The deuce take you and your dad, old fool! If I can't go forward, I suppose you will have no objection to my going

back the way I came? Tell your dad for me that you have seen Captain Lucifer."

"Gosh-a-mighty!" ejaculated the old fellow. "Be you that varmint? I reckon you will have to stay right whar you be. Drop that thar gun, or I will see what effect a bullet will have, plump in the eye— Ha! no foolin'; drop it, I tell yer!"

There was no use trying to dodge it, that gun had to be dropped; Old Joe held the drop in grim earnest.

The ruses of the outlaw were futile. Old Joe held him right there until George Grill and Deadwood Dick made their appearance.

The explanation of the situation was immediate; then they seized the prisoner and tore the mask from his face.

The man was Melvin Munson!

"At last!" cried Dick and George, in the same breath.

At sight of them, both together, the man had paled to the lips, and he could not speak.

"The tables are turned," remarked Deadwood Dick, grimly. "What we have suffered at your hands is now about to be returned with interest, Melvin Munson, you detestable human brute!"

The man was looking from one to the other of the two men, in a daze of dismay. They looked alike—their eyes, the color of their hair and beard, and their voices, too, had a similarity. No wonder that he was puzzled.

"In heaven's name, who are you?" he managed to inquire.

"I am Deadwood Dick, betrayed into your clutches by Dudley Hockman, whom, as sheriff, I consulted when I came to this part of the country to run down Captain Lucifer. I am the man whom you doomed to death, as you supposed, by tying me to that mad horse and sending it shrieking across the barren plain some months ago."

"And I," said the other, promptly, "am George Grill, whom you confined here in these chains for a year and more, trying to make me give up the secret I hold. I am the only man who knows the hiding-place of Mountain Guerrilla's big store of plunder, and you knew that I knew it. But, wolf that you are, that secret should never have been yours!"

"And what am I to expect?"

"Mercy, of course," said Dick, with irony.

"Mercy, to be sure," sneered George.

"I do not ask it—I dare not ask it. You have got me in your power, and I am at your mercy. But, you have only got half of me."

"What mean you?" demanded Dick.

"I mean that there is another as deep in the mud as I am in the mire."

"And you will insist on some terms at our hands before you will tell who that other is, I suppose."

"You have hit it. There is another, who has played the role of Captain Lucifer a full half the time, in order that suspicion could not fall on either of us."

"And who is he?"

"Promise that you will spare my life, and I will tell you."

"We promise nothing. The man is Dudley Hockman. I know the scheme."

With a moan, the wretch sunk down, utterly in despair. He knew that he could look for no mercy at the hands of these two, whom he had so greatly wronged. The next instant he tried to leap to his death from the ledge.

He was held back, however.

"No, we have something better in store for you than that," averred Dick.

"The chains are awaiting you."

The man fought and struggled, but it was of no use, with three against him; and he was dragged, screaming, to the cavern from which Dick had so recently been rescued.

There he was put in the chains, which were so adjusted as to preclude the possibility of his escaping, and Old Joe was left to watch him.

Dick and George made their way down to the canyon, and turned their steps in the direction of Cold Camp.

Arriving there, they stopped at the office of the Big Nig, and entered unannounced.

At sight of them, Dudley Hockman paled and trembled.

"What means this?" he gasped.

"It means that this man has rescued me," answered Deadwood Dick. "Come at once with us to the cabin on the cliff, where you shall see more of the mystery revealed."

Hockman knew not what to think or do.

"For what purpose do you want me to go up there?" he asked. "What is to be explained?"

"Are you not sheriff of the county, sir? Are you not mayor of this camp as well? Whom should we ask, if not you? Come with us, or let your manager go."

"That is just it," said Hockman, grasping at the straw. "Munson is out, and I cannot leave the office this minute. If you will wait till he returns, I will go, gladly. Meantime, tell me what you have found out, or what you hope to discover."

CHAPTER XVIII.

WRONGS MADE RIGHT.

Deadwood Dick boiled with indignation.

Seeing that their plan for entrapping the man at the cabin was not going to work, he cried:

"Dudley Hockman, you are my prisoner, arrested as being in league with Captain Lucifer, if, indeed, you are not Captain Lucifer!"

The man staggered back a pace, stopping against the wall; his face was deathly pallid.

"And you?" he gasped.

"I am Deadwood Dick, whom you betrayed into the hands of your tools here, at Cold Canyon, when I came for the purpose of running down the outlaw. That was more than I was looking for, to find the sheriff himself in league with the desperate rascal, and hence it was easy for you to deceive me."

The man reached for a gun, but Dick was upon him like a tiger, and a brace of handcuffs were snapped on his wrists in a trice.

"You see, right is bound to triumph," cried Dick. "Wrong may ride for a time, but in the end truth and justice are bound to prevail. What do you suppose the people of Cold Camp will think of their mayor, now?"

"Do not expose me here, for heaven's sake, do not expose me here!" the man pleaded, in despair. "They are in the right mood for a lynching, and nothing would stop them!"

"Was any mercy shown to either of us? Do not ask mercy at our hands. If they hang you, so much the better for the country at large."

The wretch yet beseeched, but they were deaf to his entreaties.

Nothing of it was yet known in the camp.

Dick and George secured the doors of the mine office, and there made changes in their appearance.

They shaved and washed up, and that done, a difference was seen in their looks, although the likeness was still somewhat remarkable. They would have been taken for brothers, anywhere.

Dick still carried some of the scars which he had received at the time of his cruel death-doom race across the plain at the heels of Black Thunderer, but none disfigured his face. Grill was still thin, but his face showed that he was regaining his health.

"Well, now for the finale," said Dick.

"Yes; now to deliver these wretches up to the people upon whom they have imposed so long."

"No, not that, for they are my prisoners," protested Dick. "But, the expose shall be made in public, and they shall be made to feel the shame for their crimes, as a foretaste. I will fetch the other."

Leaving Grill in charge, he set out, and in due season returned with Munson, accompanied by Old Joe. The two were then chained together, and in that fashion were marched down the slope and into the camp proper, where the natives were amazed beyond measure.

At sight of them, the word was quickly passed, and by the time they reached the open space in front of the Snug Snap, the whole camp population, or nearly so, was on hand to hear and see. A table was brought, and from that Deadwood Dick made known the whole matter to the audience.

Dudley Hockman, the boss-bully, it was shown, had been one of the band of the once infamous outlaw, Mountain Guerrilla, and had escaped arrest at the time when that scoundrel was hunted down. He was eager to find the booty, and believed that George Grill knew where it was hid, owing to the fact that Grill's wife was Mountain Guerrilla's daughter—a fact that had ever been kept from Mary Grill, and which George desired she should never know.

In order to have full control of the Gold Canyon country, Hockman pretended to own it, and took Munson in with him, as partner. And, to create a dread of the place, they invented the character of Captain Lucifer, playing it between them, to their mutual safety, until the present time. Dick told of the luring of George Grill into a trap, and of his confinement there in the mountain cave. Then he related the incidents of his own attempt to hunt down Captain Lucifer, his betrayal by Hockman, and his terrible doom that had brought him so near to death's door.

The rage of the citizens knew no bounds, and it was all Dick could do to prevent the lynching of the two execrable wretches. His word prevailed, however, and they were sent immediately under strong guard to the county seat. There done, Mrs. Grill was rescued from the hiding-place under the cabin, and brought down to the camp.

It was a time of great rejoicing in the town. The treasure of Mountain Guerrilla was found in that same hiding-place, and was delivered to Grill and his wife. She was not told that her father, Henry McCasson, and the outlaw had been one and the same, but was told that the treasure was hers because found on her father's land.

The title to the whole section was clear, and when Deadwood Dick went on his way to adventures new, he left them in possession of the gulch and its mines, Grill as mayor of the town.

Needless to say, the guilty were all dealt with as they deserved.

THE END.

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